

Legislative Council Panel on Public Service

Incorporation of Basic Law assessment into civil service recruitment

Purpose

The CE has announced in his 2007 Policy Address that in addition to enhancing Basic Law (BL) training for civil servants, the Government will incorporate assessment of BL knowledge into the civil service recruitment process. This paper informs members of the implementation details of the assessment of BL knowledge in civil service recruitment.

General principle

2. The objective of the assessment on BL knowledge is to heighten public awareness of BL and promote a culture of learning of BL in the community. As a general rule, all candidates applying for civil service jobs to be advertised from 1 September 2008 onwards will be assessed on their BL knowledge. Test result will not affect a candidate's eligibility for applying for a civil service job; and the main consideration for assessing suitability for appointment remains a candidate's qualifications, experience and calibre.

Assessment of Basic Law knowledge

3. The ways in which BL knowledge are tested in civil service recruitment will be set according to the different academic qualification requirements stipulated for different types of civil service jobs. The arrangements for different types of civil service jobs to be advertised from 1 September 2008 onwards are as follows -

- (a) For civil service jobs requiring **degree/professional qualifications**, candidates will need to have taken a BL test. The Civil Service Bureau (CSB) will conduct two BL written tests for prospective applicants, one to be held on 24 May 2008 together with the Common Recruitment Examination (CRE) and the other to be held on 26 July 2008 on a stand-alone basis¹. After these two tests, CSB will conduct BL tests at around six-monthly intervals for prospective applicants of civil service jobs requiring degree or professional qualifications.

¹ The stand-alone BL written test is organized for candidates who possess the requisite CRE results or equivalent and therefore do not need to take the CRE.

The BL test paper, in bilingual form, will consist of 15 multiple-choice questions to be completed in 20 minutes. There is no passing mark set for the BL test and the full mark of the paper is 100. Participants will be informed of their results, which are of permanent validity. Holders of test results will be exempted from sitting the BL written test again when applying for any degree/professional civil service jobs or any non-degree/non-professional civil service jobs requiring academic qualifications at Form 5 level or above. Candidates may, if they so wish, take the BL test again as and when applications for such tests are called. It will be up to a candidate who has taken the BL test more than once to decide which test result to be used when applying for the relevant civil service jobs.

- (b) For civil service jobs requiring **non-degree or non-professional academic qualifications at Form 5 level or above**², the recruiting bureau or department will incorporate assessment of BL knowledge in the recruitment exercise. The recruiting entity will announce the arrangements for the BL assessment in the relevant recruitment advertisement.

The BL test paper, in bilingual form, will consist of 15 multiple-choice questions to be completed in 25 minutes. There is no passing mark set for the BL test and the full mark of the paper is 100. The recruiting bureau or department will notify candidates of their test results within four weeks. Results are of permanent validity and may be used for application of other non-degree/non-professional civil service jobs requiring academic qualifications at Form 5 level or above. It will be up to a candidate who has taken the BL test more than once to decide which previous test result to be used when applying for civil service jobs in this category. A candidate with previous BL test result may opt to take the BL test associated with a specific recruitment exercise. If so, the result for this test will be counted instead of any previous test result.

- (c) For civil service jobs requiring **academic qualifications below Form 5 level**, candidates will be tested orally on their BL knowledge during recruitment interviews. The results of BL assessment will be taken into account only if two candidates are considered equal in all other aspects.

Format and content of the assessment

4. The content of the BL assessment will be based on the text of the BL, including its annexes, attachments and appendices. Reference materials on the BL are available in the Government BL homepage. Information on the format of the test as well as sample questions and answers are available at the Civil Service Bureau website for public information.

² For the purpose of BL assessment, civil service jobs with appointment requirements at Higher Diploma, Diploma, Higher Certificate, and Certificate level where the general minimum entry requirements are set at 'Completion of Form 5', or equivalent, fall under this category.

5. For civil service jobs with BL assessment conducted through written tests (i.e. paragraph 3(a) and (b) above), the BL test result of a candidate will be assigned an appropriate weighting not exceeding 10% of the overall assessment of the candidate. For other civil service jobs (i.e. paragraph 3(c) above), the result of BL assessment will be taken into account only if two candidates are considered equal in all other aspects.

Advice sought

6. Members are invited to note the implementation details of the assessment of BL knowledge in civil service recruitment as set out above.

Civil Service Bureau
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